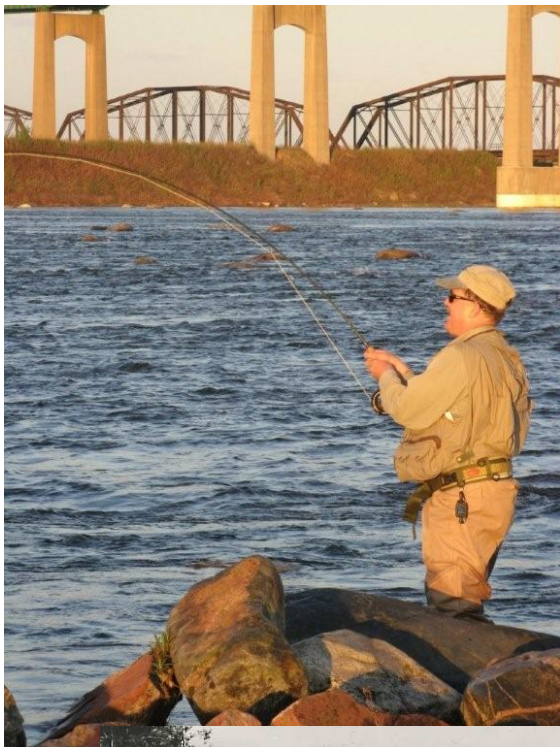


St. Marys Canadian Heritage River

10 Year Monitoring Report

2000 – 2011

Prepared for the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board
March 2012



A JOINT EFFORT



Cover Photos

Natural river dynamic beach (courtesy Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority)

Fisherman (courtesy Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources)

Ojibwes – 1671 reenactment (courtesy 'Friends of the St. Marys River')

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Executive Summary

The St. Marys River nomination for inclusion in the Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS) was accepted by the CHRS Board in 1998. The nomination document's recommendation was based on the river being an important 125 kilometre link between three Great Lakes, having outstanding cultural values supported by recreation values, being the cultural hearth of the Ojibwe people since 2000 BC, a key transportation link, having technological innovation in navigational and industrial examples, and being the venue for significant history changing events in Canada.

Following the production and acceptance of a Heritage Strategy the River was designated a Canadian Heritage River in early 2000.

This report attempts to collect and analyse the events, studies and any improvements or threats to the river for the 10 years after designation.

Through the use of a CHRS format, Natural, Cultural and Recreation values as well as Integrity values and Management recommendations have been listed with any changes to those resources noted as well as the history of any implementation of recommendations.

Some of the noted improvements for natural and recreation values in Tables 1 & 3 include shoreline management plans, designation of important wetlands as Provincially significant, recognition of river values in municipal Official Plans, tourism promotion of the river's fishing, boating and viewing opportunities, waterfront walkway and marina improvements or extensions, improvements to water quality through the Remedial Action Plan (RAP) process, increased waste water treatment, better fisheries management through enhanced Sea Lamprey control, and better creel and other aquatic studies.

Cultural values and resources noted in Table 2 include continued use in commercial and recreation transportation, a new plaque recognizing the significance of Packet Freighters on the Upper Great Lakes by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, new designations by the Sault Ste. Marie (SSM) Historic Sites Board, improvements to National Historic Sites at the Sault Canal and Fort St. Joseph, and preliminary expressions of commemoration of events during the War of 1812. Also of importance was the creation of six heritage signs placed at strategic locations along the river by 'Friends of the St. Marys River'. This action partly fulfills recommendations in the Management Plan.

Table 5 in the report lists the thirteen objectives from the Management Plan and reviews achievements or lack thereof. Many of the actions recommended for natural values have been implemented and noted above such as the RAP process, shoreline plans, new legislation for invasive or endangered species, water quality improvements, and new aquatic studies and controls. Some progress is noted for heritage values actions through tourism promotions, heritage designations, historic sites events and protection of heritage sites. Recreation enhancements include access and walkway improvements or extensions as well as water quality and fisheries studies to facilitate increased use of the river's resources.

The analysis of Integrity Guidelines in Table 4 showed no threats to most values and threats that are noted such as sediments impairment are in the process of being mitigated.

Low water levels due to natural or human causes will pose some threat to navigation and recreation values but are mostly beyond the scope of the CHRS or agencies connected thereto.

The Conclusions and Recommendations section is a summary of how the objectives set out for the ten year monitoring reports, as noted in the Introduction, are met.

Positive changes on the river and attempts at implementation of the Heritage Strategy lead to the conclusion that the St. Marys River does indeed still meet CHRS Guidelines for its Cultural and Recreation values and should retain its designation as a Canadian Heritage River.

- Some of the key recommendations are:
1. The River should retain its designation.
 2. Seek a means of monitoring the implementation of actions set out in the Heritage Strategy.
 3. Revisit the Strategy before the next ten year report.
 4. Encourage promotion of and interest in the importance of the river to the area.
 5. Explore a permanent Exhibition type facility such as a St. Marys River Discovery Centre.

Garden River Ojibwe historical Grave Stone (photo courtesy SSMRCA)

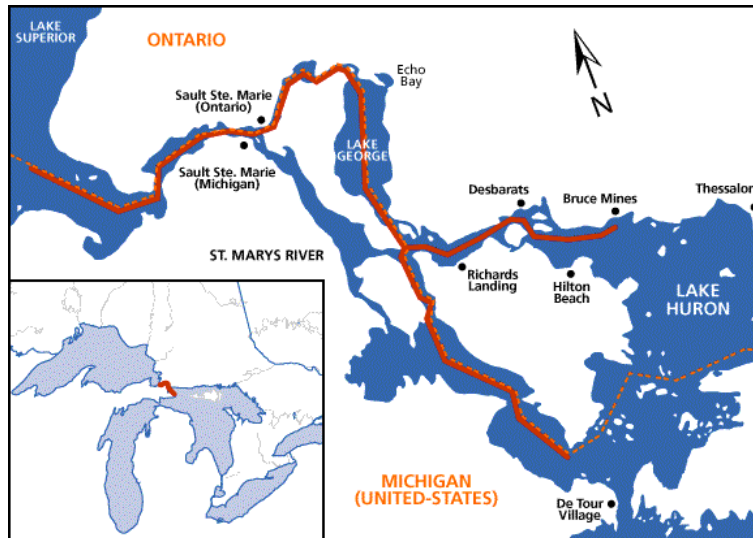


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1.0 Introduction

The first 10 years of the new millennium have yielded positive changes to the St. Marys River, a vital link between Lake Superior and lakes Huron and Michigan. Nominated in 1998 and designated in 2000 by the governments of Ontario and Canada under the Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS), the River continues to exemplify the outstanding Cultural and Recreational values for which it was nominated. The Plaque of dedication is written in three languages, Ojibwe, French and English which are the languages of the historical peoples using the River.



The CHRS is a national heritage program, a cooperative effort by the Federal, Provincial, and Territorial governments. Part of the designation process required a Management Strategy or Plan, and for the St. Marys River 13 objectives were presented with actions to be taken to sustain the River's values.

Objectives:

1. Protect Significant Landscape Elements, Vistas and Viewpoints
2. Protect Biotic Resources
3. Protect Shorelines of the River and its Tributaries
4. Protect, Restore and Create Aquatic Habitats
5. Control Sea Lamprey
6. Improve Water Quality
7. Celebrate the Diversity of the History and Culture of the Valley
8. Inventory, Document, Preserve and Maintain Heritage Resources of Significant Natural, Architectural and Archeological Interest and Value
9. Ensure All Forms of Development Are Consistent with Heritage Values
10. Promote the National Historic Sites within the River Valley
11. Protect the Integrity of the Fishery
12. Increase the Opportunities for Recreation in the River Valley Without Compromising Heritage Values
13. Recognize the Economic Potential of Tourism Based on Recreational Values

This report is a 10 year monitoring requirement to assess the status of the values identified in the Nomination Document and the management actions in the Management Strategy.

Objectives of this report:

- Describe major changes and/or events on or of the River since 1998.
- Report on the current condition of heritage values for which the River was nominated and whether the River still possesses these values.
- Review CHRS integrity guidelines to determine if they are still being met.
- Determine the degree to which actions outlined in the Heritage Strategy have been implemented.
- Describe any threats to values or to integrity guidelines since nomination.
- Make recommendations.

2.0 Background

Based on interest from the City of Sault Ste. Marie Planning Dept. and the Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority a background study was carried out in 1996 as a first step toward Nomination to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS). Nomination was accomplished due to the St. Marys River's outstanding cultural resources supported by its recreational values. Historically, use of the River's resources dates back to 2500 BC when Aboriginal people, notably the Ojibwe, fished and gathered on the River.

This was followed in the 17th and 18th Centuries by explorers, fur traders and missionaries, and in the 1900s by industrialists and immigrants. Two dates stand out to illustrate the strategic position of the River: first 1812, the start of the war of 1812 which helped determine Canada's future and second 1870, the 'Chicora Incident' which prompted the construction of the Canadian Canal.

Flowing 125 kms from Gros Cap in the west to Bruce Mines-Fort St. Joseph on St. Joseph Island in the east the River drops about 6.7 metres at the 'Sault' or rapids allowing for electrical power production on both sides of the Canada-United States border.

On the Canadian side, a canal and lock system constructed to get around the rapids is noted for its unique operating system and emergency swing dam considered engineering innovations of historical significance. In 1987 the Sault Canal was designated a national historic site by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada.

Other alterations in the vicinity of the canal system such as a series of nine railroad bridges, the International bridge for vehicle traffic, industrial complexes for steel, power and paper making and various government and municipal structures have reduced the river's width and natural character.

Elsewhere on the river most of the natural character has been saved and a Management Strategy for preservation of those values along with cultural and recreational values was prepared and

submitted to the CHRS Board in early 2000. This resulted in the designation of the St. Marys River, now one of 37, into the Canadian Heritage Rivers System by the Ontario and Canadian governments in August 2000.

Many people were involved in getting the designation covering all facets of interests on the entire length of the River. Just based on the work of that group makes it imperative for those responsible for all river interests to carry out the recommendations of the Management Strategy. This first ten year monitoring report will attempt to determine how well that effort has been achieved.

3.0 Methodology

The following approaches were used to gather information towards assessing the river's status as a Canadian Heritage River:

- Review of the Background Study, Nomination Document and Management Strategy for the St. Marys River.
- Review of annual reports submitted to CHRS.
- Interviews with key personnel with an interest in the river.
- Review of a Cultural framework for Canadian Heritage Rivers 2nd edition 2000.
- Review of various literature, media sources and website sources having relevance to the river.
- Gathering and digestion of all the information received.

Tables provided by CHRS for Natural, Cultural, and Recreational values as well as Integrity Guidelines were used to determine the river's condition in a concise and complete manner.



Fishing harvest at Gros Cap circa 1940's. 'Friends of the St. Marys River' photo.

ST. MARYS RIVER 10 YEAR MONITORING REPORT -2012

4.0 Chronology of Significant Events – 1998-2011

- 1998 Acceptance of nomination to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CWRS).
- 1998 Formation of St. Marys River Remedial Action Plan (RAP) with a Four Agency Letter of Commitment, Environment Canada, U.S. EPA, Ontario Ministry of Environment, and Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and since has reported clean-up of two impaired areas on the U.S. side of the River with removal of contaminated sediments. Also clean up of the Essar Steel boat slip on the Canadian side. Studies underway on 10 Beneficial Use Impairments. Many improvements by Algoma Steel (Essar) to wastewater and air discharges.
- 2000 Formal Designation of river as a Canadian Heritage River by senior levels of government under CHRS -August 14.
- 2000 Discussion Paper re Great Lakes Heritage Coast, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR).
- 2001 reformation of “Friends of the St. Marys River” for implementation of the Heritage Strategy.
- 2002 RAP in partnership with BPAC (Binational Public Advisory Council) completes the Stage 2 (of three) report with actions to be taken.
- 2003 Completion of Heritage Sign project by the ‘Friends’. No further actions recorded for this group after 2004.
- 2004 Invasive Alien Species Strategy for Canada. Environment Canada.
- 2004/2006 SSMRCA adopts new regulations for development, interference with wetlands, and alterations to shorelines and watercourses - Ontario Regulation 176/06.
- 2002-2006 Coastal wetlands evaluations for Ducks Unlimited in the lower river – St. Joseph Island, Desbarats and Echo Bay. Also done for the upper river.
- 2005 Provincial Policy Statement for Ontario. Protection of natural resources.
- 2005 City of Sault Ste. Marie and Prince Township Official Plan updates started.
- 2006 City of Sault Ste Marie completion of secondary treatment at the east end waste water treatment plant.
- 2006 Passing of *Ontario’s Clean Water Act 2006* to protect municipal drinking water sources will help enforce water quality standards as implementation of the Source Protection Plan takes effect.
- 2005/2006 Initiation of alternative control measures by DFO Sea lamprey Control on the St. Marys River. Trapping, sterile male release and larval treatment with Granular Sea Lamprey Larvicide has resulted in declines in Sea Lamprey effects.
- 2007 Passing of *Endangered Species Act, 2007 for Ontario*.
- 2007 and 2011 City of SSM extensions of waterfront walkway 2007 and 2011. Part of the HUB trail and connection to the Trans Canada Trail.
- 2007 Algoma Steel becomes Essar Steel Algoma Inc.
- 2008 Usage of 95% of blast furnace and 5% coke oven toxic gases with installation of a Co-generation facility at Essar Steel eliminates gases going to the environment.

- 2008 Study by Kresin Engineering for partnership-SSMRCA and OMOE “Bellevue Marine Park Contaminated Sediments”.
- 2008 Algoma University College becomes a University and gains independence.
- 2009 Canada and the USA agree to look at amending the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement towards better stewardship of all Great Lakes waters.
- 2009 Formation of Stewardship Council for East Algoma. OMNR initiative.
- 2009 Passing of *Ontario’s Pesticides Act 2009*.
- 2009 Concerned citizens form the East Algoma Freshwater Coalition to deal with invasive species and nutrient loading at least in part on the lower river reach near Desbarats.
- In the period: Kensington Conservancy Land Trust formed in the lower river area of Desbarats. Wetland and habitat conservation. Not for profit 2001. Registered Charity 2006. 10 properties protected-1 purchased, 9 donated so far. A total of 319.6 Ha.
- 1998-2011 Sault Naturalists, through the Great Lakes Heritage Coast Initiative, build four waterfowl viewing stations along the river.
- In the period: Industrial improvements include water recycling at Essar, and Tenaris Algoma Tubes, diversion of effluent at Praxair from the river to the sanitary system, and several storm water treatment improvements at commercial use areas in the City of SSM.
- In the period, sediment removal in tributary streams by the SSMRCA in partnership with D. F. O. reduces migration to the river.



The Rapids as they were, mighty and productive. 'Friends of the St. Marys River' photo

5.0 Natural Heritage Values

5.1 Background

The St. Marys River was not nominated on its natural heritage values. However under CHRS Guideline i) as an example of geological time and processes, the river valley does exhibit outstanding geological diversity. Affected by major stages and processes in evolution a record of Canada's past formations can be seen. Eg. Precambrian Shield, rifting and faulting of the Keewenaw era, scarps and sills of the Michigan Basin, and dunes and beaches of the Wisconsin glaciation. Some of the bed rock examples are ancient granite, waterlaid sandstone, and limestone. A 122m scarp of an eroded batholith forms the entrance to the river. The geological features are not influenced by manmade impoundments.

Under guideline ii) the river is in the evolutionary process of erosion and deposition to some extent due to sandy shores, changing water levels and wave action. Plant and animal communities also change with climate change, water level and temperature changes. This is especially true for Provincially significant wetlands found along the river.

Guideline iii) is the least represented but outstanding examples of fish and waterfowl are present in the valley. The 'rapids', even as they exist to-day, is a feature of the river that is unique and where some of the best fishing in North America is found.

Guideline iv) requires that rare plants exist in the river areas. There are at least four examples of this, at Gros Cap, at Whitefish Island and two old pine sites on fluvial sands of Mark's Bay and Garden River. There are 9 terrestrial and 7 aquatic species at risk listed for the river area by OMNR SSM District as of January 2012.

5.2 Condition of values since designation.

Changes have been positive for river water quality with added waste water treatment but contaminated sediments remain to be dealt with downstream of the rapids. There are no new threats to natural values and monitoring and protection efforts are ongoing by citizen and government bodies and agencies.

Table 1 addresses further, the condition of the river 10 years after designation.

Table 1: Natural Heritage Values since Designation

CHRS Natural Framework (2001) Themes & Sub-Themes	Natural Heritage Elements Description	Significant Actions, Research or Studies	Changes or Threats to Nomination Value(s)
1. HYDROLOGY			
1.1 Drainage Basins	Lake Superior and several medium and small streams downstream of Lake Superior.	Sediment removal by the SSMRCA from stream channels. Source (Water) Protection Plan studies for the City of SSM and Prince Twp.	None. The St. Marys River was not nominated for its natural heritage values.
1.2 Seasonal Variation	River freezes in winter in upper and lower reaches.		Clearing of ice by ice breakers in the Fall and Spring may affect natural processes.
1.3 Water Content	Upper reach to the rapids is basically free of contamination. From the rapids to lower Lake George, Industrial and Municipal wastes add organic and inorganic particles to the water.	Addition of secondary treatment to municipal and industrial wastewater facilities have improved water quality. Three areas of impairment have been cleaned to date. Two USA, and one Canada. Ongoing testing of river bed and water.	There are still several areas of impairment identified to be removed from the Area of Concern.
1.4 River Size	125 km in length Avg. flow- 2144cu.m/sec.	None	none

Natural Heritage themes photos:



The Rapids, illustrating River Morphology and Fluvial Landforms (photo courtesy 'Friends of the St. Marys River')



Geology and Seasonal Variation in photo of bluff formation at the river entrance (photo courtesy 'Friends of the St. Marys River')

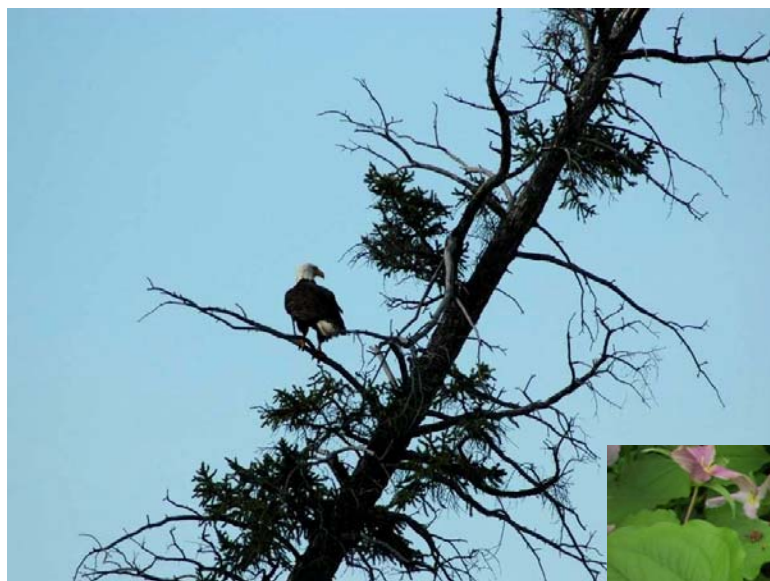
Table 1: Natural Heritage Values since Designation

CHRS Natural Framework (2001) Themes & Sub-Themes	Natural Heritage Elements Description	Significant Actions, Research or Studies	Changes or Threats to Nomination Value(s)
2. PHYSIOGRAPHY			
2.1 Physiographic Regions	Bluff topography at the outlet of Lake Superior (Precambrian) into a rift valley (Nipissing ecoregion) of Canadian Shield on the north and sandstone and glacial deposits on the south in the upper reach with some limestone (Ordovician) outcropping in the lower reaches. (See appendix 2 Nomination document)	none	none
2.2 Geological Processes	Following glacial retreat, erosion has created beaches and other deposits.	Some shoreline structures have been installed to control erosion.	Erosion in some reaches is ongoing.
2.3 Hydrogeology	<u>Upper reaches</u> Underlying sandstone, and glacial beaches allow ground water flows to the River. Small streams carry surface water over sand and clay deposits. <u>Lower reaches</u> Characterized more by clay and till deposits, flatter medium size streams carry water to the River.	Ongoing monitoring of water quality. Studies done in past years for City of SSM area for aquifer and recharge areas for groundwater sources of drinking water. Some areas below former glacial beaches exhibit flowing wells from pressures in the aquifers. Assessments also done since 2006 for the Source Protection Plan.	None

Table 1: Natural Heritage Values since Designation

CHRS Natural Framework (2001) Themes & Sub-Themes	Natural Heritage Elements Description	Significant Actions, Research or Studies	Changes or Threats to Nomination Value(s)
2.4 Topography	Narrow constricted flat valley with Canadian shield uplands to the north, the River drops from Lake Superior level of 183.5 masl to Lake Huron level of 178.6 masl.. The lower River is braided into two channels around islands with some lake formations as it levels out into Lake Huron.		None
3. RIVER MORPHOLOGY			
3.1 Valley Types	Constricted to wide flat rift valley.	none	none
3.2 Channel Types	Natural to dredged channels with lock structures to provide access around rapids.	none	None
3.3 Channel Profile	Varies from west to east. Constricted somewhat at the entrance by rocky bluffs, controlled downstream in the locks area, and splits around islands in the downstream reaches. Dredging for shipping has been done over most of the river's length.	The RAP process is monitoring dredging activity.	Dredging will continue for shipping interests. Dredge spoils have been deposited in the river in the past.
3.4 Fluvial Landforms	Raised beaches and islands.		none
4. BIOTIC ENVIRONMENTS			
4.1 Aquatic Ecosystems	Wetlands, rapids and tributary streams.	From 1999-2006 approx. 17 wetlands were evaluated and 10 were Provincially Significant. Significant wetlands are protected by the Province and municipal official plans.	Development could affect some wetlands. Most are protected and there have been no threats since designation. However there are development possibilities in the upper river and in the Lake George sections OMNR District lists 7 species at risk ie. Threatened, endangered or sp.concern. eg. Redside Dace, Shortjaw Cisco, and Northern Brook Lamprey.
4.2 Terrestrial Ecosystems	Great Lakes St. Lawrence forest types		Examples of old growth Pine still intact in two locations.

5. VEGETATION			
5.1 Significant Plant Communities	Old growth red and sugar maple, red and white pine.		none
5.2 Rare Plant Species	Rare in Algoma-Saxifrage, spp, skunk cabbage, tickseed. Gros Cap area – blue wild rye, rattlesnake hawkweed, Braun’s holly fern. Sault Canal - western hawthorne, dwarf St. John’s wort.	Wetland assessments	None known.
6. FAUNA			
6.1 Significant Animal Populations	none		
6.2 Rare Animal Species	Species at Risk in this District ie. Endangered or Threatened *See column 4	Species at Risk now listed.	*Golden Eagle, King Rail, American White Pelican, Peregrine Falcon



Bald Eagle at Gros Cap (photo courtesy of Dean Thompson) for Fauna theme.



Showy Trillium common in the lower reaches of the river. (Photo courtesy of ‘Friends of the St. Marys River’) Flora theme.

6.0 Cultural Heritage Values

6.1 Background

The St. Marys River has been and is the focus for transportation themes, historical significance and non contact recreation.

CHRS Guideline i) requires an importance to Canada of the river's impact on native people, settlement patterns and transportation over time. The St. Marys River's outstanding contributions have been recorded historically in early use of the river by native people as they frequently lived nearby and used it for transportation, fishing, other provisions and camping. Artifacts dating back to 2500 B.C. have been recorded by archeologists. Many Anishinabe and all related peoples still inhabit the river's shores. History in the 17th and 18th centuries saw the era of the fur trade and the voyageur canoes which also carried missionaries to the native peoples.

More recent history saw the building of locks to get around the rapids, bridge crossings, compensating dams and power facilities. Settlement occurred close to the river 'highway' at Sault Ste. Marie and Bruce Mines. Ore and Grain carriers from the west have to pass through the river and lock system making the St. Marys a vital link in Canadian and International trade and one of the world's most important Canals.

Guideline ii) requires that the river be strongly associated with persons, events, movements, achievements, ideas, and beliefs of Canadian Significance. Several examples of all of the above are historically documented such as discoverer Etienne Brule, Chief Shingwauk, Fur Traders, Henry Schoolcraft, Jesuit Missionaries, Francis H. Clergue, and Charles Ermatinger. Movements of military personnel also had to pass by or on the river. (the 1870 Chicora incident).

Guideline iii) involves historical or archeological structures, works or sites which have rare, unique or antiquity significance. The river still easily fulfills this guideline as cited in the previous documents for designation such as Whitefish Island artifacts of Aboriginal origin dating back to 200 BC, and showing evidence of continuous use. Today the island is used by hikers and naturalists with permission from the Batchewana First Nation.

Non contact recreation¹ presently engaged in includes fishing, various species in a variety of water conditions from warm to cold, hiking on the Voyageur Trail and waterfront walkways, boating of all kinds, nature appreciation and photography, ship viewing, camping, rock and fossil collecting, and boat tours.

Table 2 indicates further description of values since designation.

¹ ie. Non submersion in water such as swimming or snorkeling

Table 2: Cultural Heritage Values since Designation

CHRS Cultural Framework (2000)	Cultural Heritage Value(s)	Significant Actions, Research or Studies	Changes or Threats to Nomination Value(s)
1. RESOURCE HARVESTING			
1.1 Fishing	Historical evidence of Aboriginal fish camps and whitefish harvesting at the rapids.	OMNR rainbow sampling study 2006 Also creel surveys by the St. Marys Fishery Task Group.	The rapids area retains a good fishery. Low water on the rapids could pose a threat.
1.2 Shoreline Resource Harvesting	Previous mining of sand and gravel in the reach above the rapids	Mining discontinued prior to 1998. Some fur trapping continues	none
1.3 Extraction of Water	Historical and current use by industry, governments and municipalities.	Under the Ontario Clean Water Act a Source Protection Plan is being formulated which will mediate existing threats and prevent future threats to SSM's municipal water supply that comes from the river at Gros Cap and from ground water.	Continued climactic warming could cause reduced production for power and other interests.
2. WATER TRANSPORT			
2.1 Commercial Transportation	Use by Lake and Ocean freighters carrying goods to and from western US and Canadian Provinces/States to Eastern markets. Historical use by Packet boats and Bateaux.	A plaque commemorating the use of Passenger and Packet Freighters was erected recently on the river at SSM by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. The historic ship MS Norgoma at the Roberta Bondar park site is an example of those freighters.	Vessel wake may have adverse effects on some areas of the river especially for erosion on sandy shores in the upper river and low lying or flatter shores in the lower river. Vessel size and draft requires periodical dredging.
2.2 Transportation Services	Cross river bridges for vehicle and railroad usage. Former trading posts. Coast Guard maintains shipping lanes.	Possible multi-modal hub establishment in SSM to connect water, rail and truck services	No changes to river crossings or services. A deep water harbour study is being considered.

Cultural Themes Photos:



Transportation, Extraction, Communities, Boundaries, Spiritual Assc'n. themes (top photo courtesy of James Smedley) (Tall ship photo courtesy of Shelagh Yanni).
 Plaque photo courtesy of SSMRCA) (Cross photo Courtesy 'Friends' of the St. Marys River)

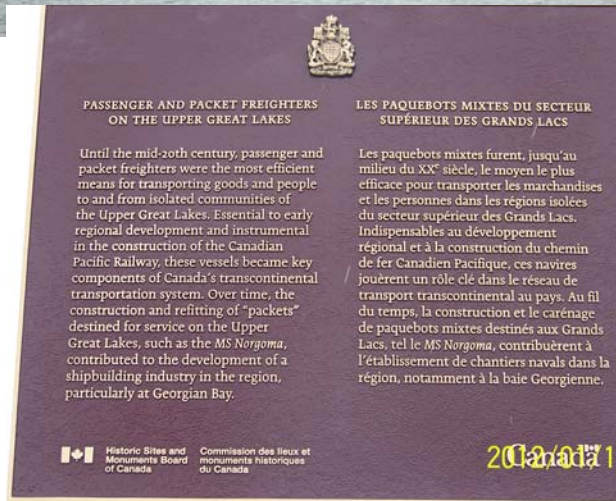
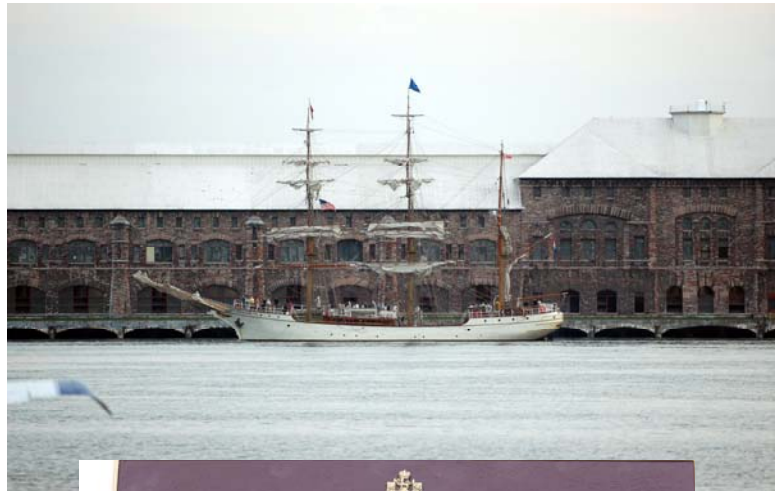
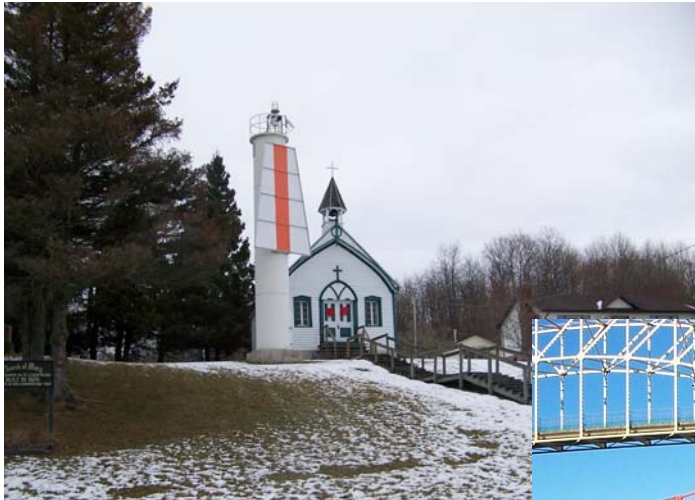


Table 2: Cultural Heritage Values since Designation

CHRS Cultural Framework (2000)	Cultural Heritage Value(s)	Significant Actions, Research or Studies	Changes or Threats to Nomination Value(s)
2.3 Exploration & Surveying	None at present. Historical events reported in the Background and Nomination documents.		none
3. RIPARIAN SETTLEMENT			
3.1 Siting of Dwellings	Historically, dwellings were built close to the river. Eg. Fur trade posts, aboriginal fishing villages. Old Stone House, Churches.		none
3.2 River-based Communities	No new communities since designation. Historical communities reported in the Background and Nomination documents.	‘Ketegannseebee’ name of the Garden River First Nation Community considered as “the Creator’s Garden” (From their website).	none
3.3 River-influenced Transportation	Early railroad bridges crossed the river.	Former Ferry Service replaced in the 60’s by the International Bridge.	none
4. CULTURE & RECREATION			
4.1 Spiritual Associations	Ojibway burial grounds and historic St. John’s mission are evidence of spiritual associations with the river at Garden River. Also in SSM, Precious Blood and St. Luke’s Cathedrals were associated with early settlement from the river.	In recent times a large lit cross was erected in SSM which is visible to all visitors on the river.	none



Siting of Dwellings theme, sketch of Old Stone House (Courtesy of 'Friends of the St. Marys River')



Navigation Improvement and Cultural/Spiritual Assoc'n. themes (Courtesy of SSMRCA) Sailor's Encampment, St. Joseph Island.



Bottom right – **Cultural Expression** theme - Sault Canal Emergency Swing Dam. (Courtesy of 'Friends of the St. Marys River')

Table 2: Cultural Heritage Values since Designation

CHRS Cultural Framework (2000)	Cultural Heritage Value(s)	Significant Actions, Research or Studies	Changes or Threats to Nomination Value(s)
4.2 Cultural Expression	The Art Gallery of Algoma and nearby SSM Museum and main Library exhibit history on the river. At least 20 plaques or cairns and designated historic buildings demonstrate river history in SSM and elsewhere along the river. Other cultural expressions are noted in the Nomination and Background documents.	The SSM Historic Sites Board continues to seek out buildings and sites for designation. Also protected in the City's Official Plan policies.	none
4.3 Early Recreation	Not discussed at the time of nomination	none	none
5. JURISDICTIONAL USES			
5.1 Conflict & Military Associations	Historical war of 1812 and 1870 Chicora incident. Military presence and barrage balloons during WW1 and WW11.	Preliminary expressions of commemoration of the War of 1812 have been carried out.	none
5.2 Boundaries	Canada/USA boundary in river since 1842.	Increased border control in recent times.	none
5.3 Environmental Regulation	MOE, DFO, MNR, Environment Canada, SSMRCA, the International Board of Control (Compensating Works) all have some jurisdiction and have been described in previous documents.	Stage two of the RAP process completed. The City of SSM Official Plan supports flood and erosion development control on the river. The Canada-USA Water Quality Agreement.	The Canadian side Area of Concern still has up to 10 impaired beneficial uses to be removed. Examples include: Degradation of Benthos below the rapids and Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat above, within, and below the rapids.



Military Conflict theme (courtesy of 'Friends of the St. Marys River')



Cultural Expression theme
(Courtesy of 'Friends of the St. Marys River')



Early River Based Recreation theme.
(Courtesy of 'Friends of the St. Marys River')

7.0 Recreation Values

7.1 Background

Early recreation probably started with boating, fishing, hunting, bathing and walking. CHRS Guideline i) requires an appropriate combination of recreational opportunities and related natural values. Boating, sail and power, and fishing opportunities in natural settings are available in the upper and lower river and carry on traditional recreation pursuits. Although the rapids area is urbanized, heavy fishing pressure is evident with both fly and bait fishing by anglers. Creel surveys show Atlantic and Pacific salmon, walleye and rainbow trout as preferred species in the rapids area. Stocking of both walleye and Atlantic salmon is done to enhance and sustain the fishery.

Guideline ii) says the river must be capable of supporting recreational uses without significant loss of or impact on its natural, historical, or aesthetic values. Relatively low populations, the size and length of the river, and regulatory controls on the river assure that the above guideline is met. Visitation to historical sites has dropped recently due to economic downturns so capacity is not exceeded. The river still possesses water quality suitable for those recreational opportunities for which it was nominated and includes both contact and non contact recreation.

7.2 Condition of the river values since designation

Water quality has improved with waste water treatment upgrades, storm water plans (City of SSM), separation of storm and sanitary flows (Cities of SSM Ontario and Michigan), industrial water recycling and contaminated sediment cleanup (Sault Michigan). Sea Lamprey control has improved in the river using alternate control methods and better fisheries baseline data is being measured by agencies on both sides of the river. Deer, and duck hunting are still popular river associated activities. Waterfront walkways are popular and marina and wildlife viewing opportunities have been enhanced. Although there are fewer tour boat opportunities, recreational boating is still being enjoyed. Figures for the recreational lock at the Sault Canal 1998-2009 show 16,673 tour boat passages, 12,379 recreational boats, and almost a million total passengers.

Cooperation from both sides of the river in the Great Lakes Fishery Commission and related committees has resulted in much better creel surveys, habitat improvements and stocking programs. The St. Marys River Fisheries Task Group, Lake Huron Technical Committee, (OMNR, MDNR, USWS and Baymills Indian Community) has been very active of late.

Wildlife viewing, historical touring, and informational signs put up by concerned citizens have enhanced this aspect of river appreciation.

Wetlands associated with the river have been assessed and twelve have been designated to be of Provincial significance. The OMNR Conservation Land Tax Program has approximately 68 landowners participating in wetland protection in the area of the St. Marys River. Some public access has been installed.

Table 3 summarizes some of the recreation values new or continued since designation.

Table 3: Recreation Values since Designation

Recreational Capability Themes and Sub-themes	Description of Current Situation	Significant Actions, Research or Studies	Changes or Threats to Nomination Value(s)
1. BOATING			
1.1 Whitewater Canoe, Kayak & Raft	N/A		none
1.2 Extended Canoe Tripping (motor & non-motor)	Some trips up and down river into lakes Superior and Huron.		none
1.3 Day Paddling & Rowing	Mainly in sheltered bays.		none
1.4 High Speed Boating	Some racing events.		none
1.5 Motorized Pleasure Cruising/Houseboats	Local and tourist cruising. No houseboats.	SSM marina figures – 2000-534 boats 2010- 374 boats Sault Canal Recreational Lock figures- 2000 – 1150 recreational boats 2009- 374	Downturn in the economy. North Central Ontario Tourism Statistics show a tourist spending drop of \$46,788,000.from 2006 to 2009.
1.6 Commercial Tour Boats	Michigan Tour boats still offer tours and cover both sides of the river utilizing the Canadian lock for passage.	Sault Canal tour boat figures 2000- 1834 2009- 370 passages.	Lower tourist visits forced the closure of the Canadian lock tour facilities.
2. ANGLING			
2.1 Day Angling	Fly fishing in the rapids. Bait fishing and trolling above and below the rapids.	The St. Marys River Fisheries Task Group has carried out whole river creel surveys covering years from 1999 to 2009.	Sea lamprey and other invasive species such as Round Goby and Zebra muscles. Recent surveys have not turned up any <u>new</u> invasive species.
2.2 Weekend Angling	Possibly some along with salmon and pickerel tournaments.		Economic downturn.
2.3 Extended Angling Vacation	N/A		
2.4 Fly Fishing	Excellent in the rapids.		Low water levels could be a threat.

Recreation Themes photos-10 year report



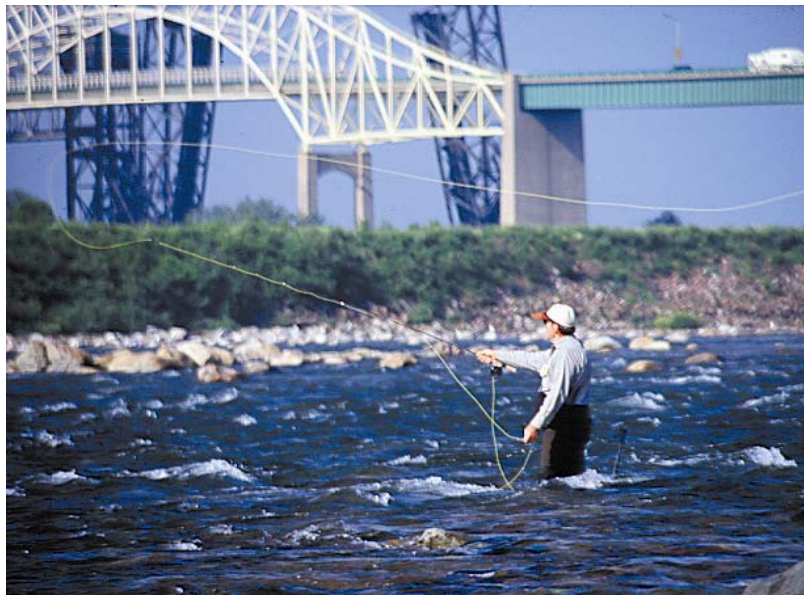
Tour Boat and Cultural/Sporting Event themes. (top photo (Courtesy of 'Friends of the St. Marys River')



Vistas, Parks, Historical Education themes. One of six signs along the river by 'Friends of the St. Marys River'. (Courtesy of SSMRCA)

Table 3: Recreation Values since Designation

Recreational Capability Themes and Sub-themes	Description of Current Situation	Significant Actions, Research or Studies	Changes or Threats to Nomination Value(s)
2.5 Ice Fishing	Bays in the upper river and river widenings such as Lake George down river.		Shipping channel ice breaking and water level fluctuations.
2.6 Specific Fish Species	Atlantic and Pacific salmonid species, rainbow and brown trout, whitefish in the waters influenced by Lake Superior. Pickerel, bass, perch, pike, carp in warmer waters influenced by Lake Huron.	A creel survey in 2001 showed a catch of 488 Atlantic Salmon in the St. Marys. Northern Pike catch- 6000 in 2000 and 2001- The highest level in Lake Huron. Source: Great Lakes Fishery Commission 2004 Report for Lake Huron.	Sea lamprey, invasive species and pollution are all possible threats. Eg. Rusty crayfish, purple loosestrife, Eurasian watermilfoil, round goby. Low water levels would pose a threat to fish spawning and rearing habitat.
3. WATER CONTACT/CONTENT			
3.1 Swimming	Popular activity in the upper and lower river outside of the influence of industry and municipal development.	Facilities at Pte. des Chenes and Ojibway parks are maintained for swimming and camping. Mark's Bay Conservation Area offers swimming.	Occasional pollution with beach closures after large rainfall events or prolonged high temperatures.
3.2 Water Skiing	Active sport in the "Cottage" areas of the upper and lower river.		none
3.3 Snorkel/Scuba	Some for general and shipwreck viewing.		none
4. WATER-ASSOCIATED ACTIVITIES			
4.1 Trail Use (hiking, walking, cycling)	City of Sault Ste. Marie Waterfront Trail allows walking, viewing and cycling in at least three seasons. Other communities have at least trail use and viewing around marinas.	Extensions to the trail system in 2007 and 2011 in the City. Trail now extends from Sault Canal to former hospitals waterfront. The city of SSM Official Plan encourages waterfront parks, trails and access.	none



Day Angling theme (photos
Courtesy City of SSM and OMNR)



Table 3: Recreation Values since Designation

Recreational Capability Themes and Sub-themes	Description of Current Situation	Significant Actions, Research or Studies	Changes or Threats to Nomination Value(s)
4.2 Camping	Available at Ojibway Park on the Garden River First Nation, at Pte. des Chenes, and a few other smaller campgrounds.		none
4.3 Hunting	Some whitetail deer and duck hunting outside of the municipalities and mostly on or near St. Joseph Island.	Introduction of wild turkey populations on St. Joseph Island has been successful.	Populations are stable.
5. WINTER ACTIVITIES			
5.1 Snowmobiling/Dog Sledding	Popular, and several snowmobile clubs are active. Mainly sheltered bays are used for river travel. Dog sledding has been a recreational pastime.		none
5.2 Cross-country Skiing	Trails are in use near communities along the river but usually not associated with the river.		none
5.3 Skating	Not usually associated with the river.		none



Boating theme, sailing lessons, (courtesy Andrew Hallett and Anita Beckett, top photo)



Tourism theme – St. Joseph Island, (SSMRCA photo)

Table 3: Recreation Values since Designation

Recreational Capability Themes and Sub-themes	Description of Current Situation	Significant Actions, Research or Studies	Changes or Threats to Nomination Value(s)
6. NATURAL HERITAGE APPRECIATION			
6.1 Wildlife	Eagles, osprey, many migratory waterfowl and other raptors are seen with occasional sightings of deer and moose along the river. Peregrine falcons have reportedly been seen on the International Bridge.	Environment Canada initiated a 2-year study to assess bird health as an action under the Remedial Action Plan for the St. Marys River. 2011. Also in partnership with the OMNR, baseline habitat condition for breeding marsh birds and amphibians. Also studies underway of wildlife deformities, and habitat and population monitoring.	Pollutants could still be a threat if not regulated enough. Also invasive species could be a threat if uncontrolled. Habitat for endangered species (9 on the OMNR District List) could be damaged if development controls are not in place.
6.2 Vegetation	Maples and oaks are particularly colourful in the Fall. Pines and hemlock of the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Forest are visible along most of the river's shores.		Most good examples are protected in crown land, municipal parks or conservation areas.
6.3 Vistas/Scenic Quality	The entrance to the river at Gros Cap is spectacular with high bluffs. The rapids, the islands, tributary streams, the Canadian Shield, and historical structures afford many varied views.	There has been research into acquisition of some of the Gros Cap bluffs by The Algoma Highlands Conservancy Waterfront walkways and viewing platforms allow full enjoyment of the river scenes.	none



Cultural/Sporting Event theme. Dragon Boat races.
(Courtesy of YMCA)



Ice Fishing theme, (Courtesy of OMNR)



Vistas, Scenic Quality theme. (Courtesy of Travis Favretto) Photo at Mark's Bay Conservation Area in upper river and winner of 2009 Conservation Areas Photo Contest.

Table 3: Recreation Values since Designation

Recreational Capability Themes and Sub-themes	Description of Current Situation	Significant Actions, Research or Studies	Changes or Threats to Nomination Value(s)
6.4 Geological Features/Water Features	Glacial raised beaches, the Canadian Shield, Limestone terraces on the lower river islands. Water features include the rapids and lake formations around islands.		
7. HUMAN HERITAGE APPRECIATION			
7.1 Historic Sites	Most identified by plaques or other protection by City of S.S.M., and Federal and Provincial agencies. National sites at the Sault Canal , Fort St. Joseph and Ermatinger Old Stone House.	Continuous investigation into older buildings and sites. Historic Sites Board designated 15 new buildings since 2000 under the Ontario Heritage Act. New plaque erected by Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada to highlight use of Passenger and Freight Packet boats on the upper Great Lakes.	None other than normal aging.
7.2 Cultural Landscapes	Ojibway homelands area on the Garden and Batchewana First Nations, the historical industrial buildings in red sandstone, and the built municipalities of S.S.M., Bruce Mines, Richards Landing, and Hilton. Also Sault Canal and Fort St. Joseph Historic Sites structures.		Landscapes are intact at this time.

Table 3: Recreation Values since Designation

Recreational Capability Themes and Sub-themes	Description of Current Situation	Significant Actions, Research or Studies	Changes or Threats to Nomination Value(s)
7.3 Sporting Events/Activities	2002-2011 Dragon Boat Races. 5,304 participants in 221 teams. Waterfront runs and boat races including both sail and power. Annual Tug Boat races.		Economic downturn
7.4 Cultural Events/Activities	Many ethnic and Aboriginal gatherings and celebrations both national and international. Eg. International Bridge Walk from both sides in alternate years. Finnish Festival held in 2011. Visit by the occasional cruise ship and tall ships of historical vintage.	Ontario Winter Carnival Bon Soo has been running for many years and takes place on the St. Marys River shore parks with a Polar Bear swim in the river. Commemoration of War of 1812 activities planned.	None, events are ongoing.

Sporting event theme, annual tug boat races (courtesy Tourism Sault Ste. Marie)



8.0 Integrity Guidelines

8.1 Background

Table 5 indicates how the river filled and fills the integrity guidelines as discussed fully in the Background Study 1996 and the Nomination Document 1998.

8.2 Condition of the river since designation.

There are no new threats to the Integrity Guidelines since 2000 and some improvements have been made to water quality and wetland protection as noted elsewhere in this report. Table 4 summarizes the condition since designation.

Table 4: Integrity Guidelines since Designation

CHRS Principles, Procedures and Operational Guidelines (2000)	Integrity Value(s)	Changes or Threats to Integrity Value(s) since Nomination
1. NATURAL INTEGRITY GUIDELINES		
1.1 The nominated area is of sufficient size and contains all or most of the key interrelated and interdependent elements to demonstrate the key aspects of the natural processes, features, or other phenomena which give the river its outstanding natural value.	The river is 125 km in length with a flow of 2200 cm/s, has provincial wetlands, significant fishing and recreational opportunities.	The St. Marys was not nominated on Natural values but even so the values are very high and are not threatened.
1.2 The nominated area contains those ecosystem components required for the continuity of the species, features or objects to be protected.	Conservation areas and other protected sites will protect most of the species and features as required.	Effects of global warming and alternate sources of power not completely known at present.
1.3 There are no human-made impoundments within the nominated area.	Not applicable (N/A)	
1.4 All key elements and ecosystem components are unaffected by impoundments located outside the nominated area.	N/A	
1.5 Natural values for which the river is nominated have not been created by impoundments.	N/A	
1.6 The water of the nominated area of the river is uncontaminated to the extent that its natural aquatic ecosystem is intact.	Applies in the upper and lower reaches of the river.	Areas of concern remain especially on the Canadian side in the middle reaches.
1.7 The natural aesthetic value of the river is not compromised by human developments.	Applicable for about 80% of the river.	No threats at present.

Table 4: Integrity Guidelines since Designation

CHRS Principles, Procedures and Operational Guidelines (2000)	Integrity Value(s)	Changes or Threats to Integrity Value(s) since Nomination
2. CULTURAL INTEGRITY VALUES		
<p>2.1 The nominated area is of sufficient size and contains all or most of the key interrelated and interdependent elements to demonstrate the key aspects of the features, activities or other phenomena which give the river its outstanding cultural value.</p>	<p>The river demonstrates historical Aboriginal gathering sites (Whitefish Island, Gros Cap), historical buildings, the Sault Canoe Lock, The Ermatinger Old Stone House, Shingwauk Chapel, Precious Blood Cathedral , St. Lukes Cathedral. Also historical sandstone industrial and Canal buildings, railroad bridges across the river, old mines at Bruce Mines, military evidence at Fort St. Joseph.</p>	<p>No threats to impair important features, activities and phenomena which are key to the river’s outstanding cultural value. To-day art galleries, museums, walkways, historic plaques, marinas, ethnic celebrations, cross border culture and trade, historical and water based tourism, Chippewa and Ojibwe pow wows and river festivals all carry on and demonstrate the cultural values of the river valley of St. Mary.</p>
<p>2.2 The visual appearance of the nominated area of river enables uninterrupted appreciation of at least one of the periods of the river’s historical importance.</p>	<p>The National Historic Sites of Fort St. Joseph, the Ermatinger Old Stone House and the Sault Canal have uninterrupted opportunities for appreciation. Also historic plaques are located in areas of easy access.</p>	<p>No threats at present</p>
<p>2.3 The key artifacts and sites comprising the cultural values for which the river is nominated are unimpaired by impoundments and human land uses.</p>	<p>Sites are protected. Eg. Whitefish Island archeological artifacts and National Historic Sites are protected by Parks Canada.</p>	<p>No threats.</p>

Table 4: Integrity Guidelines since Designation

2.4 The water quality of the nominated area does not detract from the visual character or the cultural experience provided by its cultural values.	Water quality is being improved and in any event does not detract from character or experience of its cultural values.	One major Industrial Plant, St. Mary's Paper has not operated for two years and Essar Steel must meet discharge criteria of the Ontario Ministry of Environment.
3. RECREATIONAL INTEGRITY VALUES		
3.1 The river possesses water of a quality suitable for contact recreational activities, including those recreational opportunities for which it is nominated.	Applicable above the rapids and below Lake George.	Impairments below the rapids continue to threaten contact recreation.
3.2 The river's visual appearance is capable of providing river travelers with a continuous natural experience, or a combined natural and cultural experience, without significant interruption by modern human intrusions.	Modern City buildings at Sault Ste. Marie are the only interruption of a continuous experience.	Low population growth in the areas of the river will mean low risk of threats.
3.3 The river is capable of supporting recreational uses without significant loss or impact on its natural, cultural or aesthetic values.	No impact from present recreational uses. A large river with relatively low populations	None

Mixed visual appearance – Historical Schooner 'Baltimore' and SSM City Hall (courtesy Tourism SSM)



9.0 Management Plan Review

Table 5: Management Plan Recommendations, Progress and Proposed Actions Post 2011

1. Natural Heritage Values			
Objectives	Recommended Actions	Progress since 2000	Actions post 2011
1.1 Protect Significant Landscape elements, vistas and viewpoints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increase awareness -Further studies -Maintain diversity -Identify areas and sustain them 	<p>Extensions of S.S.M. waterfront walkway with plaques. Six Heritage signs produced by Friends of the St. Marys River for strategic sites along the river. Construction of 4 wildlife viewing stations by Sault Naturalists. Formation of a Freshwater Coalition to raise awareness of river and lake conservation east of SSM.</p>	<p>Ensure continuous monitoring and compliance to Municipal, Provincial, Federal and other policies for the River environs.</p>
1.2 Protect Biotic Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -through planning process -through tax incentives -identify all sites 	<p>Official Plans are updated. Approximately 68 properties protected under the Conservation Land Tax Program.</p>	<p>Provide input to planning processes and put a mechanism in place to identify new areas to be protected.</p>
1.3 Protect Shorelines including tributaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -assess shoreline -identify natural features -information for landowners - protection policies in regulatory documents -review of alterations -no development in hazard lands 	<p>OMNR has a Shoreline Management plan along the river's length. SSMRCA has regulations in place being enforced for the SSM and Prince Twp. Sections.</p>	<p>Both authorities to continue with outreach and use of Best Management Practices to sustain shoreline integrity values.</p>

<p>1.4 Protect, restore and create Aquatic habitats</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -monitor aquatic environments -Expand conservation communications -support regulation of dredging -support water quality improvement -Facilitate remedial works -Support adequate watering of the rapids 	<p>Designation of Provincially Significant wetlands accomplished. Conservation messages are being used to educate the public in regard to invasive and endangered species, habitat degradation, erosion control, tax incentives etc. Agency partnerships and cooperation support efforts to improve aquatic areas.</p>	<p>Continue to monitor aquatic habitat and encourage joint efforts.</p>
<p>1.5 Control Sea Lamprey</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -continue research into effective controls -continue a bi-national control effort -support adequate funding for assessment and control 	<p>DFO Sea Lamprey Control, continues trying better control efforts. Recent additions of trapping, reducing larval populations, and male sterilization have resulted in declines in lake trout wounding and mortality in the St. Marys River.</p>	<p>Support continuous funding for prevention and control of new invasive species affecting fish and other populations in the river.</p>
<p>1.6 Improve water quality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - encourage public awareness of quality concerns -Continue to monitor -Encourage strict enforcement of regulations -support implementation of the Remedial Action Plan -Support upgrading of any waste water treatment -support actions to separate storm water from sanitary systems -evaluate point source treatment compliance with regulations -support disposal regulations for all vessels -Maintain quality and quantity of ground water to the river 	<p>The Remedial Action Plan has identified the St. Marys River Areas of concern. The City of Sault Ste. Marie added secondary treatment to its East End waste water plant in 2006. Also separation of storm water from sanitary was accomplished in the last ten years. Point sources are being monitored by the OMOE. The Clean Water Act, 2006, for protection of drinking water will contribute to maintaining quality and quantity of ground water to the river through implementation of Source Protection Plans in the SSM area.</p>	<p>Encourage implementation of sediment control or removal in the area of concern. Continue monitoring efforts.</p>

Heritage Strategy theme photos



Sediment Sampling - RAP implementation. (Courtesy Innovation Centre, Algoma U)



Signage erected at Marina. One of six along the river. (Courtesy of SSMRCA)

Objectives	Recommended Actions	Progress since 2000	Actions post 2011
2. Human Heritage Values			
2.7 Celebrate the diversity of the history and culture of the valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sharing of information among cultural groups. - Promote local events - promote the recording of cultural heritage. - Encourage educational programs. - Support financial assistance to cultural groups. 	<p>Promotion by: National Historic Sites, Tourism SSM, Ontario Tourist Information Booths. These agencies also promote sharing and recording of events. Several ethnic groups, First Nations display their history and culture annually.</p>	<p>Highlight cultural and historic events with flyers, poster displays in public buildings, and media publications or announcements. Continue to support funding applications. Promote the river's significance during the City of SSM 100 Year Celebrations and War of 1812 Commemoration.</p>
2.8 Inventory, document, preserve and maintain heritage resources of significant natural, architectural and archeological interest and value.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote the importance of preserving the river's human heritage. - support a Provincial Register of historic sites. - maintain the inventory of local significant sites. - Identify sites in planning documents for protection. - Support acquisition of sites where necessary. - Facilitate partnerships to support protection and interpretation of heritage resources. 	<p>Many natural sites have been documented as Provincial wetlands, sensitive shorelines, rare plant communities, and archeological heritage. Sites and artifacts are protected through legislation, planning documents and conservation areas.</p>	<p>Continue to investigate areas of interest and take steps necessary for protection, documentation and maintenance. Support funding, partnerships, and efforts towards a Provincial Register of historic sites.</p>
2.9 Ensure all forms of development are consistent with heritage values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Require archeological assessment prior to development. - Use planning policies to conserve significant heritage resources. - Continue designation of properties under the Ontario Heritage Act. 	<p>Heritage designation is continuing by the City of SSM. Also some protection of heritage resources in planning policies, national, provincial and municipal sites.</p>	<p>Use every means of assessing development where possible heritage values might exist and protect those values if found.</p>

Heritage Strategy themes photos



Creel census result, Freshwater Gar. (Courtesy of OMNR)

Fish sampling survey – Rainbow Trout. (Courtesy of OMNR)



Study of bird health – (Courtesy of Environment Canada)

Table 5: Management Plan Recommendations, Progress and Proposed Actions Post 2011

Objectives	Recommended Actions	Progress since 2000	Actions post 2011
2.10 Promote the National Historic Sites within the river valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support protection and development of National Historic Sites Values. - Use and promote historic sites for education and celebrations. 	Friends of the Sault Canal Site return in 2010. All National Historic Sites have celebrations and historic interpretation by Parks Canada.	Encourage tourism agencies to promote all historic sites, events and facilities.
3. Recreational Values			
3.11 Protect the integrity of the fishery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support continuing research and improvements to river habitat. - Review the advisability of a stocking program. - continue fish and threats monitoring. 	The RAP process and the St. Marys River Fisheries Task Group have paved the way for many improvements to water quality, stocking of appropriate fish species, and protection of existing species through invasive species research and the Sea Lamprey Control Programs.	Support the RAP coordinator function, fisheries research, and monitoring of all fish and fisheries values. Continue stocking of specific fish species following science based objectives and studies. Support the possibility of a commercial fishery.
3.12 Increase the opportunities for recreation in the river valley without compromising heritage values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - encourage recreation respecting river values. - Encourage more public access to the river where possible. - support and encourage cooperation among landowners, cultural groups and developers to allow proper use of the river's resources. 	New waterfront walkways and access through marinas.	Continue to seek out public access to the river where this can be done without compromising natural or other heritage values. Continue to monitor uses of the river to assure proper use and care of resources.

Objectives	Recommended Actions	Progress since 2000	Actions post 2011
3.13 Recognize the economic potential of tourism based on recreational values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expand public awareness of the contribution made by the river towards tourism and as a destination for recreation. - encourage and support further development and enhanced opportunities for recreation and tourist development. 	Tourist agencies and operators target many areas in Canada and the U.S.A. as an ongoing business practice. Tourism SSM statistics for North Central Ontario from Statistics Canada and Tourism Ontario show top Trip Activities(2009) as Boating, Fishing, Parks, Historic Sites, and Museums. All of which are available on or near the River.	Continue support for increased awareness of the river's opportunities for tourism, especially in times of economic hardship. A focus on the river should be made as the jumping off point for further exploration and touring.
4.Implementation Objectives			
4.1 Empower a group to monitor the strategy and pursue implementation of objectives.		A start was made with incorporation of Friends of the St. Marys River.	At least provide someone to monitor the situation and promote appreciation of the heritage river.
4.2 Develop educational programs highlighting river values.	Historic sites promote and educate the public at their properties.	Ongoing	Promote this at all school levels, museums, historic sites and in local media.
4.3 Expand public awareness of the Strategy.	Some distribution initially.	Somewhat lacking at present.	Ongoing but not coordinated.
4.4 Encourage partnerships with an interest in the river.	BPAC, Fisheries coalitions, the RAP process	A fair start has been made in this regard.	Continue to seek other partnerships as needs arise.
4.5 Seek funding for implementation of objectives.	A grant was obtained to create six signs to be placed along the river.	No further action.	Nothing in the works but required for effective monitoring.
4.6 Support American designation under their Heritage Rivers Initiative	Being monitored.		Ongoing.



View of Rapids Fisheries Remedial Berm, Cityscape and Cambrian Hills; photo courtesy 'Friends of the St. Marys River'

Water transport, vistas, and recreation themes.



New waterfront walkway,
(part of the Hub Trail)
Clergue Park area (photo
courtesy City of SSM)

10.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

10.1 Conclusions

Based on a review of current activities and studies, and past documentation for CHRS, we can conclude that the St. Marys River still meets CHRS Guidelines for its Cultural and Recreation Values.

Except for a few negatives, changes during the first ten years of the 21st century and plans for the 2nd decade support the conclusion above, and appreciation, use, and stewardship of the river by local inhabitants and visitors alike can be continued.

The St. Marys River should retain its designation as a Canadian Heritage River.

10.2 Recommendations

- i) A key implementation action/objective, that of empowering a group to monitor the Strategy and pursue implementation of actions was not carried through as per the expectations of the Strategy. The 'Friends of the St. Marys River', started up again in 2001, made an excellent start having meetings and finishing a sign project. However after 2004, little was reported for the group. Based on past history of successful responses to real or perceived problems on the river, eg. 'The Rapids Society', the 'Friends' could be restarted but the recommendation now is to seek out one of the existing agencies having jurisdiction on the river, and having partnerships with other agencies. If a willing agency with sufficient capacity is found, then a formal request could be made to have a person monitor the Strategy actions on a part time basis until funding can be found to sustain a position. Monitoring to include:
 - The RAP process
 - Various fishery and wildlife studies, RAP and other
 - Shoreline alterations and inventory
 - Wetland protection and inventory
 - River awareness
 - Effectiveness of various government programs
 - Cultural expression
 - Preservation of old and newer heritage resources
 - New development and planning processes
 - Recreation and any impacts on the river
 - Tourism promotion of the river attractions
 - CHRS Annual Reports
- ii) Annual reports should be comprehensive enough to facilitate the ten year report.
- iii) Use the annual and ten year reports to promote the river values and the need for wise use and deriving economic benefits from the river.
- iv) Revisit the Heritage Strategy before the next ten year report.

- v) Encourage interest, sharing and voluntary input in all aspects of the river as a living legacy of vital importance to the Algoma Region and Canada.
- vi) Promote exhibition of the St. Marys River photo histories wherever visitors attend – tourism facilities, the Norgoma museum ship, the waterfronts, marinas, and municipal and other government offices.
- vii) Explore a St. Marys River Discovery Center and make this known to City of SSM planners for review. (Note: The MS Norgoma museum ship is listed as the ‘St. Mary’s River Heritage Centre’ on its website).



View of Purvis Marine and the Bushplane Museum (Formerly OMNR Fire Control Hangars) Photo courtesy Algoma University Innovation Centre. **Water transport and tourism** themes.

Appendix A

Acknowledgements

1. The staff and Board of the Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority who allowed use of office space and computers and supplied much information and review help.
2. Multi Agency staff who supplied information when requested by email or in person.
3. People who called in or emailed because they had stories of river experiences.

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Acronyms Used

City of SSM or S.S.M. – City of Sault Ste. Marie or Sault Ste. Marie
CHRS – Canadian Heritage Rivers System
OMNR – Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
OMOE – Ontario Ministry of Environment
RAP – Remedial Action Plan
AOC – Area of Concern
U.S. EPA – United States Environmental Protection Agency
SSMRCA – Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority
Masl – Metres above Sea Level
Algoma U – Algoma University
D.F.O. – Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada
MDNR – Michigan Department of Natural Resources
USWS – United States Wild life Service